

INITIATIVE 654

I, Ralph Munro, Secretary of State of the State of Washington and custodian of its seal, hereby certify that, according to the records on file in my office, the attached copy of Initiative Measure No. 654 to the People is a true and correct copy as it was received by this office.

1 AN ACT Relating to adoption and foster care placement of minor
2 children; adding new sections to chapter 26.33 RCW; and creating new
3 sections.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** Chapter . . . , Laws of 1996 (this act) shall
6 be known and cited as the responsibility in adoptions act.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 26.33 RCW
8 to read as follows:

9 The people find that there is a compelling state interest in the
10 adoption and foster care of minor children, however, the people find
11 that the state's interest in adoptive and foster care placement of
12 minor children is limited to consideration of the well-being of minor
13 children in need of adoption or foster care and does not extend to
14 providing for the needs, whether real or perceived, of adults to become
15 adoptive or foster care parents. Therefore, the people find that in
16 adoptive and foster care placement of minor children all consideration
17 must be given to the well-being of the child, and that sound, loving
18 relationships are the most important initial consideration of that

1 well-being. The people further find that there is a compelling state
2 interest in the adoptive and foster care placement of minor children,
3 if at all possible, in a loving, nonjudgmental home, without regard to
4 the gender of the adoptive or foster parents, and that allows for
5 freedom of religious choice. Therefore, the people establish that:

6 (1) Neither the state of Washington nor any political subdivision
7 nor any agency of the state may, for purposes of adoptive or foster
8 care, place any child into the custody of a person who practices right-
9 wing fundamentalist Christianity, or who participates in any political
10 organization or religion that condones the discrimination of
11 individuals who practice dissimilar beliefs. Placement of minor
12 children made before the effective date of this act is not affected by
13 this section.

14 (2) Nothing in this section may be construed to permit the state or
15 any agency of the state to take or remove any child from the custody of
16 the child's natural parent.

17 (3) Nothing in this section may be construed to permit the state or
18 any agency of the state to initiate inquiries into or undertake
19 investigations of parents, or to otherwise violate the privacy of
20 families, except as otherwise provided by law to monitor the continued
21 well-being of children placed by the state for purposes of adoptive or
22 foster care.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 26.33 RCW
24 to read as follows:

25 Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the following
26 definition applies to section 2 of this act:

27 "Person who practices right-wing fundamentalist Christianity" means
28 any person who believes the Bible in its entirety is the unarguable
29 word of God, and based upon his or her interpretations of biblical
30 scripture, places negative moral judgments on individuals of dissimilar
31 beliefs or sexual orientation, engages in active recruitment of others
32 to do likewise, applies their interpretations of biblical scripture to
33 form extreme political agendas, and willingly self-identifies with the
34 beliefs described in this definition.

35 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The people intend that chapter . . . , Laws
36 of 1996 (this act) be liberally construed to provide the greatest
37 possible assurance that all adoptive and foster care placements of

1 minor children are made in the best interest of the child with the
2 well-being of the child being of primary concern.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Chapter . . . , Laws of 1996 (this act) shall
4 in all parts be self-executing. A person residing in the state of
5 Washington or a nonprofit entity doing business in this state has
6 standing to enforce the provisions of sections 2 through 6 of this act.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** If any provision of this act or its
8 application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the
9 remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other
10 persons or circumstances is not affected.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** In the event that a conflict arises between
12 chapter . . . , Laws of 1996 (this act) and any other provision of law,
13 the policies and purposes of this act shall govern.

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